

**MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF ICKLEFORD PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN ICKLEFORD VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30PM ON TUESDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2007**

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**Present:** Councillors P J Crowe (Chairman), M Maxwell, C R Thurstance, D Chapallaz, K Goldie, J Carlyle, G Palmer and T Stephenson.

**Officer present:** Katrina Henshaw (Parish Clerk).

**Also present for part of the meeting:** County Cllr N Brook, PC M Jenkins, PCSO N Williams and Dr Michael Willoughby (Vice Chairman of the Parish Plan Steering Group).

**42 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

42.1 Apologies were received and accepted from District Cllr T Gibbs (Another meeting) and Mr Derrick Squires (Member of the Parish Plan Steering Group).

**43 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.**

43.1 No 'personal' nor 'personal and prejudicial' interests relating to items on the agenda were received.

**44 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2007.**

44.1 Following a proposal from Cllr Goldie, seconded by Cllr Maxwell and agreed unanimously it was

**RESOLVED**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2007 be approved and the Chairman was authorised to sign them as a true record of the meeting.**

**45 UPDATE FROM POLICE**

45.1 Crimes in Ickleford.

PC Matt Jenkins reported that within the last month there have been nineteen recorded crimes, six of which were domestic and related to one family. The other crimes included

- Criminal damages to three vehicles in Turnpike Lane.
- One burglary where access was gained by smashing some French doors.
- Two attempted burglaries where entry was not gained.
- One indecent exposure in Turnpike Lane.
- One hanging basket stolen.

Five of these crimes, including the indecent exposure, have been detected.

45.2 No Cold calling zones.

PCSO Nikki Williams advised that over 50% of elderly residents would need to be in agreement with the no cold calling policy and the area also has to have been affected in the past by bogus callers / distraction burglaries which have been reported to police. The police would have to inform the Council of suggested locations so that they could send out packs to residents. Depending on the response level the no cold calling zone would then be enforced. PCSO Nikki Williams is currently investigating if Wyatt Close and Greenfield Avenue could be considered to become a no cold calling zone.

**46 UPDATE ON ONGOING MATTERS.****46.1 Proposed Burial Ground.**

Cllr Crowe reported that Justin Smith, Cemetery Development Services Limited was preparing a report and would then expect IPC to apply for outline planning permission. Frank Pratt is still looking into the entrance to the site and hopes to come up with a proposal that will meet Hertfordshire Highways' guidelines. David Hillelson, Heritage Network was waiting for Mr Instone, Planning Archaeologist at HCC to confirm if his report concludes that no further tests are required. Cllr Brook agreed to request that Mr Instone supplies an answer promptly and if further tests are required he provides a satisfactory explanation. **NB**

**46.2 Parish Plan.**

The Steering Group will be meeting in September to review the action plans.

**46.2.1 Update on the crime and disorder action plan**

Cllr Maxwell reported that he had attended the second locality panel meeting in August. Unfortunately, it was poorly attended with only himself and a representative from Holwell present. PC Jenkins and PCSO Williams both gave an update on the key issues and advised that they are out throughout their parishes with their speed guns twice a week. PC Jenkins is also currently looking into volunteers being trained to use speed guns. During the next quarter the Safer Neighbourhood Team will be concentrating on flytipping and will be promoting road safety in schools.

**46.2.2 Update on the traffic and transport action plan.**

Cllr Stephenson reported he had put an article in the September edition of the St Katharine's Wheel updating Ickleford residents on progress made with the traffic and transport action plan. Cllr Stephenson will agree dates with the police for further speed checks in the village. Although, Cllr Stephenson acknowledged that this exercise did not prove if there was a speed problem in the village as vehicles slowed down as soon as they spotted the police, it did reduce speed considerably so was worth doing regularly.

**46.3 Tony's News.**

Cllr Crowe reported that following the meeting on site on 4<sup>th</sup> July with Andrew Newbury, McMullens, Mr Newbury has advised that McMullen's have given the matter further consideration and they will try and re-let the shop. They have received one or two enquiries and if they can find a business tenant at a reasonable commercial rent then they will proceed on this basis. Failing that the property will have to remain empty and boarded up.

**46.4 Garage area and Little Park behind Turnpike Lane.**

Dr Michael Willoughby updated all Councillors on a meeting that he had attended with Cllr Crowe, Mr Derrick Squires, Debbie Grimes (NHH) and Stephen Sears (NHDC) on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2007. The main points were

- Debbie had posted 35 simple questionnaires to tenant households and had received 6 responses, from which no really helpful reaction had emerged.
- Debbie produced plans of a scheme which would provide a line of garages down one side of the NHH property and open parking spaces down the other side at a projected cost of £300,000. However, it was agreed that vandalism would continue at some level whatever was built, so all were sceptical as to the prospects for success of such a costly project and therefore its chances of ever seeing the light of day.
- Debbie would approach NHH's legal advisers to obtain clarification of the rights possessed in law by garage owners and to what extent these had been forfeited by their universal failure to pay rental in recent years as well as clarifying if NHH could, by giving them sufficient notice, regain ownership of the garage plots. The answers Debbie received would be used to determine the wording of any further communication sent out to tenants.

- Stephen advised that NHDC property extended well to the West of the hedge along the allotment at that end, and that this strip of land was leased to a householder in Bedford Road.
- Stephen had prepared - and now 'planted' - a notice requesting the holder of that allotment to identify himself to NHDC.
- The two allotments at the East end of Little Park were held on land lease from NHDC's Estates Department, though not as part of the Council's allotment scheme.
- Stephen would explore the possibility of dismantling the unsightly fence that separated the mini-football pitch from the driveway that gave residents of Turnpike Lane access to their garages from Greenfield Avenue. All believed that, even if the goalposts were then removed, any plan to make a public amenity of this space had no chance of success, since it would never be possible to eliminate completely the criminal activity that had for so long made it a no-go area for residents.
- Stephen felt that NHDC would be happy for the space to be converted to allotments, but would then want Ickleford Parish Council to administer these.
- It was agreed that installing security gates at the entrances to deny access to unauthorised vehicles was well worth consideration.
- On grounds of expense and the almost inevitable objections to be expected from residents it was most unlikely that security lighting could ever be installed.
- The police would be asked to devote more time to surveillance of Little Park.

Following discussions, it was then agreed that IPC would look into the possibility of allotments for the land owned by NHH. IPC would not consider taken over responsibility of the land until NHH have sorted out any legal issues regarding ownership of the garages and have made the area suitable for allotments. Cllr Crowe to advise NHH. **PJC**

Dr Willoughby will continue to liaise with NHH and NHDC until a satisfactory conclusion is reached.

All Councillors thanked Dr Willoughby for all his and Mr Squires' hard work in taking this action forward and offered help and support if and when they need it.

#### 46.5 Proposed Community Orchard.

Cllr Thurstance reported he had met with Richard Nicholls who advised that he wasn't able to consider the proposal at the moment and was not able to indicate if and when he could. Cllr Maxwell asked if there were any other suitable sites within the village for this project. However, no one could think of any suitable areas.

Cllr Goldie did ask if residents would be consulted if the project went ahead. The clerk confirmed that this would happen.

#### 46.6 Repairs to Cadwell Bridge in July 08.

Cllr Thurstance advised that Network Rail have now concluded their tender exercise and are in the process of contracting with their preferred bidder - Dean and Dyball. Once contract negotiations have concluded and the contractor has had chance to plan in more detail the works, John Foo, the day to day manager of the project, will be in touch to give IPC a more detailed update of our proposals. The main works will take place during a weekend closure of the east coast main line on the 12<sup>th</sup> July 2008.

Cllr Thurstance agreed to establish

- Where the contractors are planning to make a working base for assembly site management.
- If Network Rail have promoted IPC's earlier request for some support to the project to improve the safety for pedestrians and horse riders using Cadwell bridge. **CRT**

- 46.7 Gateway onto Footpath 11  
A gateway has been created onto Footpath 11 with the purpose of accessing the footpath with horses. As it is illegal to ride horses on footpaths, the clerk is to notify HCC Rights of Way.  
**CIk**

**47 REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE.**

- 47.1 Children's play area.  
As resolved at the July meeting, Cllr Stephenson will fix catches to both gates that would prevent small children being able to open the gates so easily.  
**TS**
- 47.2 Village noticeboard.  
As resolved at the July meeting, Colin Hubbard will sand the existing pinboard surface and coat with clear sealant and to wood stain all external faces and posts.
- 47.3 Willow tree on Christmas Common.  
As resolved at the July meeting, William Crosse will prune the tree shoots.

**48 PLANNING APPLICATIONS.**

- 48.1 07/01676/1HH Pinchgut Hall, Bedford Road, Ickleford.  
Single storey side extension to form addition to existing annexe.

The planning application was discussed and it was

**RESOLVED**

**That IPC would not object to this application.**

**REASON**

**Permitted development.**

**49 PLANNING DECISIONS.**

- 49.1 07/01332/1HH 14 Freewaters Close, Ickleford.  
Two single storey front extension and first floor rear extension.  
**Conditional permission granted by NHDC 17<sup>th</sup> July 2007.**
- 49.2 07/01289/1HH 35 Turnpike Lane, Ickleford.  
Single storey front extension.  
**Conditional permission granted by NHDC 18<sup>th</sup> July 2007.**
- 49.3 07/01470/1HH Raymond House, Upper Green, Ickleford.  
Erection of detached single garage and installation of two solar panel on front roof slope.  
**Conditional permission granted by NHDC 31<sup>st</sup> July 2007.**
- 49.4 07/01718/HH 1 Claymore Drive, Ickleford.  
Single storey rear extension and hipped roof to converted garage. One front and three linked rear dormer windows to facilitate conversion of roofspace.  
**Standard Conditional permission granted by NHDC 31<sup>st</sup> July 2007.**
- 49.5 07/01058/EUD, Pestol Farm, Lower Green, Ickleford.  
Lawful Development Certificate (existing): Continued use of land for stationery of mobile home.  
**Existing use granted by NHDC 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2007.**

**50 CORRESPONDENCE.**

- 50.1 CPRE – Thanking Ickleford for the warm welcome on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> July at the Presentation Ceremony for the Village of the Year awards.
- 50.2 NHDC – Arts, Museums and Heritage Strategy 2007/12.
- 50.3 NHDC – Meeting between Parish and Town Councils and NHDC planning department. To be held at the Council Offices on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> September at 7.15 pm. Cllr Carlyle and the clerk to attend. **JC/CIk**
- 50.4 NHDC – Sustainable Community Strategy Conference. To be held on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2007 at Broadway Hotel, Letchworth from 5.45 pm.
- 50.5 NHDC – Funding for Rural Play. NHDC invite any Parish Councils who are interested in working with them to develop a project and funding application to express their interest by 21<sup>st</sup> September. Cllr Maxwell and the Clerk to see if they can find a suitable volunteer. **MM/CIk**
- 50.6 NHDC – Polling Station review in North Hertfordshire.
- 50.7 HCC – Towards Better Transport in Hertfordshire – 2006/7 Progress Report.
- 50.8 Scoots – Ricky Moore introducing himself as the new Two Wheels Co-ordinator.
- 50.9 Three Valleys Water – Invitation to a key stakeholders discussion forum with Three Valleys Water on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> September (Cheshunt Marriott Hotel), Monday 1<sup>st</sup> October (Windsor Marriott Hotel) or Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October (Elstree Corus Hotel) at 6.30 pm for a 7.00 pm start.
- 50.10 Carillion – URS – A1(M) Baldock – Alconbury, sign replacement. Works are programmed to commence on 6<sup>th</sup> August and are anticipated to be complete by 20<sup>th</sup> December 2007. Works will be carried out between the hours of 20:00 hrs and 06:00 hrs.

**51 FINANCE.**

51.1 Audit 2006/7

Lubbock Fine have returned IPC's annual return form with the signed audit certificate which stated "on the basis of our review, in our opinion the information in the annual return is in accordance with the Audit Commission's requirements and no matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met".

They have carried out "basic audit" procedures only under the Audit Commission's "limited assurance" audit regime application to this Council.

The clerk has advertised the closure of audit.

All Councillors commended and thanked the clerk for all her hard work.

51.2 Budget 2007/8

IPC will need to agree the budget at the November meeting so that the Precept can be set. All Councillors are to advise the clerk of any forthcoming projects and estimated costs. **All**

51.3 Personal Expenses Procedure

All Councillors were supplied a draft copy of the proposed procedure with copies of the pre-agreement forms and expense forms. The expense procedure is to be included in the Financial Regulations so following a proposal from Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr Palmer and agreed unanimously it was

**RESOLVED**

**That the updated Financial Regulations dated 11<sup>th</sup> September 2007 would be adopted.**

**REASON**

**To ensure that all expenditure is authorised prior to the expense being incurred.**

51.4 Contribution to the printing costs of the St Katharine's Wheel

The amount that IPC will contribute was discussed and following a proposal from Cllr Carlyle, seconded by Cllr Chapallaz and agreed unanimously it was

**RESOLVED**

**That IPC would contribute £650 towards the printing costs of the St Katharine's Wheel.**

**REASON**

**To continue to being able to produce a church and village magazine quarterly.**

51.5 The Open Spaces Society

Membership Subscription for Parish Council is £30 p.a. with a £10 enrolment fee. The enrolment fee is waived though if you agree to pay future annual membership subscriptions by Direct Debit. The advantages of joining the Open Spaces Society were discussed. Following a proposal from Cllr Goldie, seconded by Cllr Thurstance and agreed unanimously it was

**RESOLVED**

**To join the Open Spaces Society and pay for future membership subscriptions by Direct Debit.**

**REASON**

**The Society protects common land and public rights of way and also offers help and advice about public paths and common land.**

51.6 NHDC Southern Rural Grants

Speed Sensitive Signs do not fit the criteria of any of the funds available from NHDC so Garry Gover, NHDC suggests that representatives from IPC make a formal request at a Southern Rural meeting (either 4<sup>th</sup> October or 6<sup>th</sup> December) for the members to agree to refer a request from IPC for a new speed sensitive sign to the North Hertfordshire Highways Partnership Joint Member Panel for consideration at their meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2008. Cllr Crowe and Cllr Stephenson agreed to attend one of these meetings and will advise the clerk which one so that it will be included on NHDC's agenda for the meeting. **PJC/TS**

51.6.1 Parish Cleansing and Enhancement Fund.

The clerk to apply for a grant for

- Emptying the three dog bins in Ickleford for 2007/8.
- Some litter pickers.

- 51.7 Notification of receipts received since the last meeting.  
The following receipt has been received since 10<sup>th</sup> July 2007.

NHDC	2nd half of the 2007/8 precept payment	£17,750.00
Calor	Village of the Year 2007	£500.00
CPRE	Village of the Year 2007	£250.00
NHDC	Grant - Parish Plan	£170.00
<b>Total receipts =</b>		<b>£18,670.00</b>

- 51.8 To approve payments for the month of September 2007.  
Following a proposal from Cllr Chapallaz, seconded by Cllr Goldie and agreed unanimously payments of £2,741.97 were approved and the cheques were signed.

## 52 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

- 52.1 Cllr Brook indicated that Luton Borough Council were proposing to develop towards Lilley and other North Herts villages so he is expecting HCC and NHDC to campaign against such expansion and he hopes that IPC would all protest when the time came.

## 53 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER COMMITTEES.

- 53.1 Ickleford Primary School Governors.  
Cllr Maxwell reported that the Y6 pupils from Ickleford School did very well in their KS2 SATS tests. The percentage of children reaching Level 4 was

- English: 93%
- Maths: 93%
- Science: 97%

In addition, the percentage of children reaching Level 5, the level expected sometime later at secondary school was:

- English: 53%
- Maths: 50%
- Science: 73%

Each child counts for approximately 3.5%.

- 53.2 Rand's Educational Foundation Governors.  
Cllr Thurstance confirmed that a reminder about funding for people is available and contact details for the Trust was put in the September edition of the St. Katharine's Wheel.

- 53.3 Ickleford Village Hall Committee.  
Cllr Stephenson reported that the Village Hall Committee had been unsuccessful with their Awards for All grant application for £10,000 so the committee were looking into other sources of funding to ensure that the work can be carried out during the summer of 2008 otherwise they could lose the grant they were awarded from PACIF. The clerk to contact Margaret Gilbert, the Chairman of the Village Hall Committee, to see if they require any assistance from IPC. **Cik**

- 53.4 Biffa  
Cllr Crowe reported that the site was filling up and the site has just over 18 months remaining.

**54 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

NB This is for exchange of information only. No decisions or actions can be agreed at this time.

54.1 Cllr Thurstance advised that HCC will be working on Grubbs Lane near the ford / gates within the next four weeks to stop the area flooding and remove the tree that has fallen over the ditch.

54.2 Cllr Crowe reported that the remaining tree on the corner of Greenfield Avenue and Turnpike Lane had broken branches so needed NHDC's tree specialist to look at it to see what action was required.

**55 DATE FOR NEXT MEETING.**

55.1 The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2007 at 7.30 pm.

The meeting closed at 10.05 pm.